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1960/08/30

[redacted]

August 30, 1960

Synopsis of State and Intelligence material reported to the President

LAOS

State feels that there are two hypotheses regarding the agreement between Phoumi and Souvanna. The optimistic hypothesis is that the two have gotten together to unify Laotians against Pathet Lao. The gloomy hypothesis, which appears to be borne out by the actions of Souvanna in the last few days, is that Souvanna is aiming to head a fully legal government which would compromise with the Pathet Lao and accommodate with Hanoi. To accomplish this, Souvanna would have to neutralize Phoumi rather than Kong Le.

State feels, therefore, that the U.S. must play a cautious game. If the meeting between Souvanna Phouma and the king at Luang Prabang results in a government in which Phoumi is a member (which now appears to be the case), then the U.S. could lend its support to that government. If Phoumi is excluded from the government, however, then we believe we must take every precaution to protect Phoumi against Souvanna. At this moment we are attempting to get the troops paid and fed to retain their loyalty. The situation is complicated by the fact that Ouane, the army chief of staff under Souvanna, is embittered by Phoumi's recent accusation that he is a Communist.

Many things are granspiring to keep the situation highly confused. The French still insist that Kong Le represents "deep feeling in Laos." Indeed, the rumor is strong in Vientiane that the French were behind this coup. Brown is optimistic to the extent that the Luang Prabang meeting will bring forth a government more pro-Western than the present Souvanna and perhaps even Phoumi.

The enigma in the whole situation is Kong Le who has stated that if the Luang Prabang assembly forms a cabinet not to his liking, he will replace Souvanna. The Pathet Lao radio has taken a position that since the assembly has repudiated its former action in Vientiane and is now meeting in Luang Prabang, it is subjecting itself to the same duress in reverse as it was before. Thus, as a gimmick, the Phoumi group hopes that Somsanith will withdraw his resignation and convene the assembly in his old position prior to the formation of a Souvanna government.

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NLE Case 98-113 #2
By BBM NLE Date 1/22/06

CONGO

Hammarskjold tells Lodge that he does not feel he has the authority to disarm the Force Publique. He expects a crisis soon and Lumumba must be "broken." If Lumumba requests withdrawal of the UN troops, Hammarskjold will convene the Security Council. Here he would try to obtain authority to disarm the Force Publique. If the USSR goes to the General Assembly, Hammarskjold feels we have 70 out of the 82 votes. Conceivably, Lumumba could try to assume control of the Leopoldville airport. Hammarskjold has a letter to be sent to Lumumba stating the UN will take all necessary measures to obtain control of the airport. Hammarskjold feels that the Katanga situation will solve itself once Lumumba is out of the way. Timberlake remains critical of the present UN formula for nonintervention.

Lumumba's request for a military campaign against Katanga has received a mixed and cool reception from other African states. Only Guinea offered outright support. Timberlake is protesting the beating of eight American airmen and is concerned about Soviet introduction of agents under the guise of the "food lift."

CUBA

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library

The Army Attache in Havana has a photograph showing Czech semi-automatic rifles in the hands of the Cuban military. This is the first confirmation of the Bloc entry of arms to Cuba. Actually, Havana already possesses an overabundance of semi-automatic rifles, some of them shipped from Western Europe after the Batista regime. Major military items do not appear to have started.

Cuba's walkout from the OAS Foreign Ministers' meeting on August 28 has placed a more favorable light on that meeting, particularly combined with the withdrawal of the Venezuelan Foreign Minister. Roa's speeches clearly implied that the Castro regime continues to regard itself as a vanguard of the anti-imperialist revolution. The Dominican Embassy has requested approval of consular status which may indicate they will approve our similar request. Meanwhile, it appears that Trujillo may formally assume the Presidency for the first time since 1952.

JORDAN

Hussein told our Charge yesterday that the two custodial employees responsible for the assassination have slipped into Syria. Hussein